



HINDI IMPOSITION PAPERS

Volume 5

**Hindi Imposition at
Indian Government
Offices**

Thanjai Nalankilli

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Volume 5

Hindi Imposition at Indian Government Offices

edited by
Thanjai Nalankilli

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Numbers in parentheses indicate number of articles by the author in this volume.

Hindi Imposition Papers

All You Wanted to Know about Hindi imposition and More

This fourteen-volumes book contains over 100 articles on the subject of Hindi imposition in India. Researchers, scholars, historians and students who want to get an in-depth understanding of India's language policy may go through these articles one by one. Others may casually browse through these volumes, stopping to read those articles that interest them. You may find lots of interesting and useful information in these articles.

Even if you are reading these articles a hundred years from now, these articles will tell you the history of the development and evolution of India's Hindi imposition policies and opposition to it, starting from 1938 to 2019. This is part of Indian history. India's language problem is an ongoing problem. We do not know where all this will lead to and how this will end.

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Preface

Thanjai Nalankilli

Each article in this book series is written on a different month and year, as indicated at the end of each chapter. Some of the items we discussed might have been rectified after immense pressure from people and politicians from some non-Hindi states. At the very same time more Hindi imposition actions would take place in other areas. One step back in one sector and two sector forward in another sector. The measure of Hindi imposition is whether there is more Hindi use in Indian government offices and enterprises (banks, railway, etc.) this year than the last. That surely is the case until the time of this writing (early 2019).

Is there Hindi imposition in India? Ask any non-Hindi employee of the Indian government or Indian government undertakings such as nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Coal India Limited (CIL), Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), ...

Hindi imperialism starts at the hiring stage in most cases. Many (not all) recruitment examinations are held in Hindi and English only. This gives an advantage to Hindi job seekers because they are able to write these examinations in their mother tongue while others have to write examinations in one of two alien languages: Hindi or English. Even if you studied Hindi in school, you are still at a disadvantage compared to Hindi people.

Once you get a job, you are asked to study Hindi and pass Hindi examinations. You are also asked to work at least certain percentage of work in Hindi. It is not voluntary. "Annual Programme for Transacting the Official Work of the Union in Hindi 2017-18" says, "The Official language policy of the Union is based on encouragement and motivation. However, the compliance of the instructions relating to official language should be ensured strictly. Ministries/Departments/Offices may consider initiating disciplinary proceedings in case of willful non-compliance of the orders relating to official language." It is very clear from the second and third sentences that learning and working in Hindi is not voluntary. This is Hindi imposition of the worst kind.

Indian Railways website (as seen on October 5, 2015) is even more direct. It says, "Failure to pass the examination in Hindi of an approved standard within the period of probation shall involve liability to termination of services."

God save the future of non-Hindi peoples of India.

(First Published: July 2019)

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1. **Forced Hindi Work at Indian Government Offices**

Thanjai Nalankilli

India has a two-language policy (Hindi and English) as long as non-Hindi states want it. Yet non-Hindi employees of the Indian government and its undertakings such as nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation, Power Finance Corporation, etc. are FORCED to do work in Hindi. "Forced" does not mean putting a gun to your head and say, "Write that e-mail in Hindi or I will shoot you". All you have to do in most cases is take disciplinary action or dismiss from the job. This is what is happening today. This policy of intimidation, threats, and dismissal if all else fails comes all the way from the top.

"Annual Programme for Transacting the Official Work of the Union in Hindi 2017-18" sent out to managers at all offices of Indian government and its undertakings by the Department of Official language says, "The Official Language Policy of the Union is based on encouragement and motivation. However, the compliance of the instructions relating to official language should be ensured strictly. Ministries/Departments/Offices may consider initiating disciplinary proceedings in case of willful non-compliance of the orders relating to official language." It starts with a sentence as if working in Hindi is voluntary but the second and third sentences clearly say those who do not work in Hindi as required should be punished. This is nothing but "forced" Hindi work.

Indian Railways website (as seen on October 5, 2015) says, "Failure to pass the examination in Hindi of an approved standard within the period of probation shall involve liability to termination of services." Is it not Hindi imposition? Is it not forced Hindi study? Why should non-Hindi employees carry an additional burden of passing Hindi examinations while Hindi employees do not have this burden? Is it not discrimination?

In my opinion, "two-language policy of Hindi and English" means an employee should have the option to work in Hindi or English without any threat of punishment. This is how the two-language policy of English and French is implemented in Canada. No French employee is forced under threat of punishment to work in English. That is a fair and just policy. What is happening in India is a "fake two-language formula" and discriminatory to non-Hindi citizens of India.

(First Published: March 2019)

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2.

Progressive Hindi Use, Implementation and Imposition at Indian Government Ministries, Departments and Offices

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Annual Progress Reports
3. An Example Report from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
4. Punishment for not Using Hindi

1. Introduction

Year by year use of Hindi at Indian government ministries, departments and offices around India, including offices in non-Hindi states, is steadily increased. This is achieved by incentives such as cash awards for more and more Hindi use and by force by taking disciplinary actions, including dismissal from job, on non-Hindi employees not attending Hindi classes, not passing Hindi examinations and not working in Hindi at the office. For example, Indian Railways says, "Failure to pass the examination in Hindi of an approved standard within the period of probation shall involve liability to termination of services." (Seen at their website October 5, 2015).

2. Annual Progress Reports

Every ministry, department and office has to submit annual progress report on the progressive use of Hindi to the Department of Official Language. Offices using more and more Hindi are awarded cash prizes and certificates. It is not possible in this article to discuss the progress reports of the dozens of ministries and scores of departments and hundreds of offices. We discuss here the report titled "Progressive use of Hindi in Official Work: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare 2017-2018".

3. An Example Report from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Here are some salient points from "Progressive use of Hindi in Official Work: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare 2017-2018". Reports from other ministries would also be similar. Those interested in a particular ministry or department may search the Internet.

3.1

An Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) has been constituted in the Ministry and its meetings are held regularly in each quarter. It chalks out strategies to implement the Official Language Policy of the Indian Union in the Ministry and its

subordinate/attached offices/autonomous organizations with a view to achieve the targets prescribed in the Annual Programme issued by the Department of Official Language.

Our Comment: For example, Indian government offices within non-Hindi states should originate at least 55% of all correspondence in Hindi. I wonder why an office in Chennai should send e-mails or letters in Hindi to an office in Madurai (both Chennai and Madurai are in the non-Hindi, southern state of Tamil Nadu). Requirement for communications between offices in Hindi regions is 100%. We have no criticism of it but we request that all correspondence between offices within a non-Hindi state be in the state's official language; for example, communications between offices within Karnataka should be in Kannada. That is fair. That is language equality.

3.2

Hindi Fortnight was organized in September 2017. Competitions such as Hindi essay writing, general knowledge on Rajbhasha policy and Hindi noting/drafting were organized for gazetted as well as non-gazetted employees separately. A dictation competition was also organized. Hindi poetry recitation competition was also organised in which large number of employees participated with great zeal and excitement. Winners of these competitions are being awarded 37 cash prizes and certificates.

Our Comment 1: Employees are taking taxpayer paid working hours for the competitions. What is the purpose of poetry recital competitions in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare?

Our Comment 2: We would rather that employees under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in non-Hindi states learn the state language instead of reciting Hindi poems.

3.3

The Department has taken a new initiative of organizing Official Language Conference every year in the offices under its administrative control. So far, organized 5 National Official Language Conferences at Bengaluru, Kannur, Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram and Mumbai. The participants were awarded Commendation letters and Certificates.

Our Comment 1: So much taxpayer paid working hours and travel is used to promote Hindi in non-Hindi states. We have no problem using Hindi in Hindi states.

Our Comment 2: We repeat: we would rather that employees under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in non-Hindi states learn the state language. Many such employees do not know the state language and it is great hardship for local people to communicate with Indian government employees who are paid to serve them.

3.4

A special quarterly original Hindi noting/drafting Cash Award Scheme is being organized in the Ministry. Under this scheme 44 prizes are being awarded which includes two first-prizes of 5000 Rupees, two second-prizes of 4000 Rupees, two third-prizes of 3000 Rupees and 38 consolation prizes.

Our Comment: We know we are saying the same thing a third time. Award cash prizes to employees who communicate with local people in the local language. It is far more helpful to people of Kerala if Indian government employees in Kerala know Malayalam rather than making notes in faraway Hindi.

3.5

Two separate Hindi workshops were conducted on April 24, 2017, in which officers/employees were informed about: (1) Official Language Policy of the Union Government, (2) Difficulties in translation and subsequent solution.

Our Comment: Teach the state language instead of pushing Hindi into non-Hindi states. Are we, the non-Hindi peoples, third-rate citizens of India?

3.6

In order to achieve the targets laid down in the Annual Programme issued by the Department of Official Language, officers of this Ministry inspected 19 subordinate offices under their administrative control situated in Delhi, Noida, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Kasauli, Shimla, Mumbai, Pune and Kolkata.

4. Punishment for not Using Hindi

What happens if some non-Hindi employees do not do sufficient work in Hindi? A memorandum from the Department of Official Language says, "Compliance of the instructions relating to official language should be ensured strictly. Ministries/Departments/Offices may consider initiating disciplinary proceedings in case of willful non-compliance of the orders relating to official language" (the quote is from "Annual Programme for Transacting the Official Work of the Union in Hindi 2017-18" from the Department of Official Language).

Every Prime Minister of India starting from the very first one, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, to the current one, Mr. Narendra Modi (2019), have promised Hindi will not be imposed. Is not punishing non-Hindi employees for not doing work in Hindi, Hindi imposition?

(First Published: March 2019)

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3.

Hindi Imposition at Indian Government Undertakings (Public Sector Enterprises)

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC India Limited)
3. Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC)
4. Penalty for not Studying/Using Hindi

1. Introduction

Hindi is "forcibly" imposed not only on non-Hindi employees at Indian government offices [Chapter 1, 2], it is imposed similarly on the 100s of thousands of non-Hindi employees of the over 250 Indian government public sector undertakings (PSU) such as nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC), Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and National Fertilizers Limited (NFL). We emphasize the word "forcibly", because whether a non-Hindi employee works in Hindi is not voluntary, they are required to study and work in Hindi under penalty of disciplinary actions, including dismissal from the job.

Here we discuss Hindi use in two Indian government public sector undertakings: Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC India Limited) and Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC). Similar situations exist in others too.

2. Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC India Limited)

Way back in 1988, speaking at the National Seminar on “official language implementation and development in public sectors” held in Neyveli (Tamil Nadu), Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Mr. S. Jayarman, said that 40 per cent of official communications are in Hindi. He added that it would reach 55% in a couple of years. Other measures taken at NLC are: (1) It had organised many seminars and workshops for improving spoken Hindi. (2) It was trying its best to implement Hindi in file notings, drafting letters and affixing signatures. (The Hindu, March 16 2008)

While NLC is compelling non-Hindi employees to learn Hindi, local workers doing construction and other works for NLC were complaining that they could not talk to company watchmen because they do not know the local language Tamil. NLC should

teach its employees to speak Tamil instead of "organizing seminars and workshops for improving spoken Hindi."

Also, why is NLC hiring out-of-staters for watchman jobs? Hire local people. Recently Kannada activists wanted that at least 80% jobs in banks should go to local people (from within the state). We agree. 80% jobs at Indian government and public sector offices should go to people from the state unless it is proven that qualified people are not available in the state. Those coming from other states must obtain a working knowledge of the local language before they start work.

3. Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC)

Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC)'s report on "Implementation of Official Language Policy" (as seen on their web site on January 15, 2019) says, "We had initiated the publication of Sanchayika, the collections of poems/stories written or brought up by our personnel. These are Hindi poems, and Hindi poems only. Why is taxpayer money wasted to propagate one language? Teach the local language where the office is located instead of spending money on publishing Hindi poems and stories.

In the same report Power Finance Corporation boasts, "Regional Office in Chennai is also doing 70-80% work in Hindi". Chennai is in the non-Hindi state of Tamil Nadu. Why are you forcing employees there to do 70% to 80% of work in Hindi?

4. Penalty for not Studying/Using Hindi

A memorandum from the Department of Official Language says, "Compliance of the instructions relating to official language should be ensured strictly. Ministries/Departments/Offices may consider initiating disciplinary proceedings in case of willful non-compliance of the orders relating to official language" [Reference: "Annual Programme for Transacting the Official Work of the Union in Hindi 2017-18" from the Department of Official Language].

"Failure to pass the examination in Hindi of an approved standard within the period of probation shall involve liability to termination of services." [Reference: Indian Railways website (as seen on October 5, 2015)]

(First Published: March 2019)

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4. **Hindi Weeks and Hindi Fortnights**

M. T.

Abbreviations

DOT - Department of Telecommunication
STR - Southern Telecom Region

Here is a 1996 memorandum from Government of India, Department of Telecommunications (DOT) Southern Telecom Region (STR) head to his managers. Similar memoranda are sent every year in every central government department. Here are excerpts from the memorandum.

"This year the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) has instructed that we organize Hindi Fortnight instead of Hindi Week. In Southern Telecom Region (STR), we have decided to have a Hindi Fortnight from September 1, 1996 to September 15, 1996. During the course of discussions of the Parliamentary Committee on Official Language with the Secretary and other senior officers of DOT, it was suggested that during the period of the Hindi Fortnight, all employees/officers should be motivated to do their maximum official work in Hindi... Therefore, I would like you to see that as much official work is done in Hindi as possible and also during this fortnight conversation with each other in the office is also done in Hindi. Officers also should sign letters in Hindi to give a fillip to the use of Hindi in day-to-day official work."

This memorandum speaks for itself of the vigor and energy devoted to imposing Hindi.

(First Published: December 1999)

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5.

What is the Need for Rajbhasha Adhikaris in Indian Government Offices? (Official Language Officers, Hindi Officers)

J. Panneerselvam and Thanjai Nalankilli

"All that the people in Hindi divisions do is harass officers insisting that they sign their names in Hindi, keep tabs on how many letters you write in Hindi and so on. They spend their time putting up nameplates and signboards in Hindi even in non-Hindi speaking states. What sense does that make?" asked a government employee (Times of India; December 5,2009).

In order to promote (impose) Hindi in Indian government offices, Indian embassies and Indian government business undertakings (nationalized banks, India Railways, Life Insurance Corporation, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, etc.), Indian government has appointed Rajbhasha Adhikaris (Official Language Officers) in every department of the Indian Government. Some employees refer them as Hindi officers and Hindi enforcement officers (although these are not the official names).

Rajbhasha Adhikaris or Official Language Officers are **responsible for using Hindi as much as possible in offices** in their jurisdiction; in correspondence and communications such as letters, memoranda, circulars, notices, etc. They are there to assure that use of Hindi is not neglected in the day to day operations, and annual time-bound programmes set forth by the Rajbhasha Department (Official Language Department) in the Ministry of Home Affairs are met; these time-bound programmes or milestones may, for example, be in the form of certain percentage (say, 40% or 60%) of all letters are written in Hindi. [See Reference 1 for more examples from official documents]. There may large numbers of Rajbhasha Adhikaris in every department at 3 levels: Senior Officers, Officers and Assistant Officers.

Procedures like observing Hindi weeks, writing a Hindi word and its English translation near the entrance of Indian government office building everyday, organizing Hindi writing contests and Hindi public-speaking contests for non-Hindi employees, asking officers to take notes and write comments in Hindi, sending out memoranda encouraging employee to converse in Hindi (even with non-Hindi employees), etc., etc. emanate from these Rajbhasha Adhikaris (Official Language Officers).

"All that the people in Hindi divisions do is harass officers insisting that they sign their names in Hindi, keep tabs on how many letters you write in Hindi and so on. They spend their time putting up nameplates and signboards in Hindi even in non-Hindi speaking states. What sense does that make?", asked a government employee (Times of India; December 5, 2009)

Not only in Indian government offices within India, Hindi officers are posted in **Indian embassies** abroad to make sure that more and more Hindi is used in embassies. President of India ordered in April 2017 that "Vacant posts of Hindi (Officers) in offices/embassies

should be filled as quickly as possible" (OneIndia.com; April 23, 2017). Is there really need for Hindi officers and more use of Hindi at the Indian embassy in Britain or America or Poland or Russia or Japan, or for that any country in the world? What a waste of taxpayer money.

Not only Indian government offices and embassies but also offices of **Public Service Undertakings** (PSU) or Indian Government Undertakings like nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation, Neyveli Lignite Corporation, etc. have Rajbhasha Adhikaris.

Let us take the example of banks. Many of us have bank accounts and have to deal with banks. What should be the purpose of any employee of a banks? It should be to provide good financial services to local people. Instead it seems the prime objective of Official Language Officers in banks located in non-Hindi regions is to push Hindi into people's throats and flaunt Hindi before their eyes? Instead of hiring Hindi officers to make non-Hindi bank employees to work more and more in Hindi even in non-Hindi states, teach the out-of-state employees the local language. Print bank forms in the local language. Why cannot people fill forms in their mother tongue in a bank located not far from their homes they and their ancestors lived for centuries, while Hindi people coming from a thousand miles away can fill these forms in their mother tongue?

The prime directive of Indian Government seems to be the promotion of Hindi in every sphere even in non-Hindi states. This seems to be the number one goal of the Indian Government over and above everything else.

(First Published: July 2001; Updated: February 2018)

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6.

Outrageous Hindi Imperialism at State Bank of India

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 7 also because of its relevance there.]

Indian Government owned State Bank of India (SBI) sent cell phone messages in Hindi (no Tamil, no English) to some customers in Tamil Nadu. Thanthai Periyar Drivar Kazhagam (TPDK) members demonstrated in front of an SBI branch in Coimbatore. (Ananda Vikatan (Tamil magazine); December 27, 2017)

This is a major problem for non-Hindi customers. Now they are at a loss as to what is going on with their bank accounts. Is there a seemingly fraudulent activity needing immediate attention? Is the account over-drawn needing immediate attention? Non-Hindi customers are at a loss to know.

Non-Hindi peoples' repeated requests that Indian government offices and enterprises (such as banks) communicate with people in their mother tongue have fallen into the deaf ears of Indian government. But Hindi is everywhere in these banks and other enterprises in non-Hindi states.

(First Published: July 2018)

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7.

Karnataka Takes a Strong Stand Against Language Discrimination in Banks

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Institute for Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)
2. Chief Minister's Letter
3. Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) Takes the Lead
4. Kannada Development Authority (KDA) Comes Out Against Unfair Banking Job Examinations
5. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister Wants Kannada also in Banks
6. Where is Kannada in Karnataka Banks?

1. Institute for Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)

Institute for Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) holds examinations for employment in banks, insurance and other financial sectors. During 2016-2017, over 15 million (1.5 crore) candidates registered for examinations. IBPS examinations are held in English and Hindi. There was a requirement IN THE PAST that a candidate must know the state language where he/she wants to work. **Indian government has removed this requirement.** Now the candidate need not know the state language to get the job but will be given time to learn it. However, in the last several months in Karnataka State, there are many incidences of bank employees from other states not communicating with local people in the state language Kannada. (Bangalore Mirror; September 11, 2017)

2. Chief Minister's Letter

Local candidates and Karnataka Rakshana Vedike activists protested and disrupted IBPS examinations. Following these protests, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah wrote to Indian government opposing the changes to IBPS and complained that Karnataka students are short-changed. He wrote, "This change in rules under the system is proving to be utterly insensitive to the regional sentiments causing large scale resentment among youngsters of our State.... Candidates from other states who join banking sector in Karnataka have to serve in rural banks where they are supposed to interact with villagers in the local language of Kannada. If the officials who do not know Kannada language fail to communicate properly with local people, this will cause dissatisfaction among people.... This will not only come in the way of effective implementation of government sponsored schemes (both central and state government), it will also create cultural, social and linguistic issues which will adversely affect customer service." (Bangalore Mirror; September 11, 2017)

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that holding examinations for jobs in banking, railways and central excise in Hindi and English only was violation of constitutional principles. His letter added, "All the 22 languages included in Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India are national languages and they demand equal importance with no language having preference over other." (Bangalore Mirror; September 11, 2017)

We applaud the people of Karnataka, language activists and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for their efforts to protect Kannada. We hope that other non-Hindi states will do the same. We do want to point out that the chief minister acted (wrote the letter) only after protests by language activists. So it is important that non-Hindi peoples take the lead in protecting their languages instead of waiting for political leaders to act.

In the opinion of this writer, out-of-staters should get jobs only if suitable candidates are not available within the state.

3. Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) Takes the Lead

Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) launched "Namma Banku Kannada Beku campaign" and demanded the removal of Hindi from deposit forms, checkbooks and other paperwork of banks. KRV also demanded banks hire only Kannadigas. KRV said that a few bank employees in Mandya and Chikkaballapura had asked customers to speak in Hindi because they did not understand Kannada. State Bank of India said that clerical level jobs are offered to only those who are literate in Kannada. However officer-level jobs are central government appointments and local managers have no say in it. There is no requirement these officers know Kannada.(TheNewsMinute.com; August 9, 2017)

4. Kannada Development Authority (KDA) Comes Out Against Unfair Banking Job Examinations

Kannada Development Authority (KDA) chairman S G Siddaramaiah asked Karnataka Chief Minister to stop the bank recruitment examinations as only candidates who know English and Hindi are recruited. (Knowledge of the state language Kannada is not a requirement.) KDA said that Kannadigas are losing out on the opportunity of getting bank jobs because of this. Also farmers and villagers who do not know Hindi or English suffer in banking. Similarly, all recruitment to central excise services, railways, tax departments, and other Indian government services should have adequate representation of people who know the state language. (News18.com; August 24, 2017)

5. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister Wants Kannada in Banks

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara wrote to Indian government Finance Minister Arun Jaitley to ask the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) to conduct examinations for banking jobs in Kannada also (now it is only Hindi and English). He also pointed out that bank deposit forms, application forms, procedural documents and ATM kiosks are available only in English and Hindi. He added that this is a "systematic discrimination". He also wanted all bank employees who do not know

Kannada must gain proficiency within a set time and passing a proficiency test must be a condition for continued employment. (TheNewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

This writer believes that only those who know the state language must be hired for bank jobs. There are plenty of eligible candidates. If someone from another state want to come into the state, let him/her study the language first.

6. Where is Kannada in Karnataka Banks?

Kannada Development Authority Chairman S.G. Siddaramaiah said, "Of the approximately 18,000 employees recruited by banks in Karnataka between 2015 and 2017, only a few hundreds are Kannadigas because of the restructuring of recruitment rules and procedures. These non-Kannadiga bank employees in rural branches of banks have become a problem for local people as they do not communicate in Kannada." (The Hindu, October 11, 2018)

While Indian government becomes more and more strict that Indian government owned bank employees know Hindi, it is relaxing rules that these employees know the state language. It is unfair and unjust.

(First Published: January 2019)

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8.

Two Forms of Hindi Imposition at Banks: Eleven Examples

Thanjai Nalankilli

[Some of the information in this article may also be found in an article in Volume 10 also because of its relevance there.]

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Two Forms of Hindi Imposition
3. Eleven Examples

1. Introduction

Indian Government, under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, nationalized over a dozen banks in 1969. Thus the Indian Government became the owner and operator of these banks, employing tens of thousands of employees and serving lakhs of customers (1 million = 10 lakhs). As usual, **once the Indian Government gets its hands on something, it becomes a vehicle for imposing Hindi on non-Hindi peoples.**

2. Two Forms of Hindi Imposition

2.1 First Form of Hindi Imposition

Hindi imposition through banks comes in two forms. Employees, even those working in non-Hindi states, are forced to learn Hindi. Of course this is an unnecessary burden on non-Hindi employees who work in non-Hindi states; a burden that Hindi employees do not have to carry. Why should non-Hindi employees who work in non-Hindi states be burdened with learning Hindi? They could use that time to learn computer programming or accounting or business management or other such professional courses to improve their skills and get ahead in the job market. Hindi employees do not have this burden of Hindi and may use the time to relax, enjoy life or study more useful subjects.

2.2 Second Form of Hindi Imposition

The second form of Hindi imposition is on customers. Deposit forms, application forms and passbooks in many banks located in non-Hindi states are in English and Hindi only. Automated Teller Machines (ATM) are also in English and Hindi only in most locations. Where is the state language that most local people know? If you do not know English or Hindi, you have to beg other customers or bank employees to help you with these forms and ATMs. A Hindi person who is from a distant land 1000 miles away can transact business in his/her mother tongue but a native whose house is 1000 feet from the bank may not be able to use his/her mother tongue. Is it fair? Is it just?

We list some news items from the last few years. This is by no means a complete list. We also want to point that some of the items we listed might have been rectified after immense pressure from people and politicians from some non-Hindi states. At the very same time more Hindi imposition actions would take place in other areas. The measure of Hindi imposition is whether more Hindi use in Indian government offices and enterprises (banks, railway, etc.) this year than the last. That surely is the case until the time of this writing (early 2019).

3. Eleven Examples

3.1 Why no Native Malayalam at Banks in Kerala?

Aksharam Kala Sahithya Vedi organized a demonstration in front of State Bank of India demanding Malayalam be used in bank forms in Kerala (The Hindu; June 8, 2013). Bank forms are in Hindi and English only in State Bank of India.

3.2 No Kannada at Banks in Karnataka

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara wrote to Indian government Finance Minister Arun Jaitley pointing out that bank challans ("deposit form"), application forms, procedural documents and ATM kiosks are available only in English and Hindi in most banks. He said that this is a "systematic discrimination" (NewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

3.3 Arrogance of a Bank Employee in Kolkata (Calcutta)

A HDFC Bank customer in Kolkata (Calcutta) in West Bengal filed a complaint with the bank about a bank employee. According to the complaint, a bank employee asked this customer to fill out the bank form in English or Hindi. When the customer insisted on filling the form in Bengali (the state language), the bank employee told the customer to learn the languages [English or Hindi] or go to Pakistan or Bangladesh.
(www.NewsBits.in; August 30, 2018)

Although HDFC is not owned by Indian government, it comes under the jurisdiction of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI has a duty to enforce that customers are able to do transactions in state language. It is failing to do so.

May be this arrogant employee should learn the state language Bengali or go to England or a Hindi state to earn his/her living.

On a serious note, laws should be enacted or Indian constitution amended to require that proficiency in the state language is a pre-condition for employment in private and government institutions. An employee should know the language from day-one of employment.

3.4 Bank Staff Attack Customer for Wanting to Use Kannada in Karnataka

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara said last week that a man was attacked by a bank staff in Kolar for asking to carry out a transaction in Kannada. (TheNewsMinute.com; August 15, 2018)

3.5 IDBI Bank Uses Hindi and also Violates the Constitution

Some IDBI Bank offices in Karnataka added Hindi signs on some boards (there is no state language Kannada added) in 2016. The numerals are not in the international numerals but in Devanagiri numeral. This is unconstitutional because constitution was clear that official language is Hindi in Devanagiri script with international numerals.

3.6 Hindi Awards at Reserve Bank of India

Speaking at a meeting on the 50-th anniversary of the Rajbhasha Department at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the RBI governor announced three new awards (cash prizes) of 1.25 lakh Rupees (125000 Rupees) each for original Hindi books on economics, banking and finance (Huffington Post (India); May 25, 2016).

How about prizes for banking related books in other Indian languages? Don't we want those languages to develop into the modern age too? After all, non-Hindi peoples pay taxes to the Indian government too. Why this discrimination?

3.7 Punjabi to be Ousted from Punjab and Sindh Bank Branches

Indian Government issued a circular that all the administrative work at Punjab and Sindh Bank branches should in Hindi instead of Punjabi (Sikh Siyasat News; March 17, 2017).

3.8 "Text Us in Hindi or English" says State Bank of India

State Bank of India asked its Tamil customer to text them in English or Hindi. After an uproar in tweets, the bank said that calls to local bank landline could be made in the local language. (TheQuint.com; January 5, 2018)

So Non-Hindi peoples have to use the outdated 20-th century technology of landlines and the modern 21-st century cell phone technology is for Hindi people only.

3.9 Kannada Check will not be Accepted in Karnataka

A man in Karnataka wrote a check in Kannada (official language of the state) and gave to LIC for premium. When LIC deposited it, ICICI Bank refused because it was written in Kannada. He filed a complaint with the district consumer court. (Times of India; January 26, 2017). (LIC - Life Insurance Corporation - owned and operated by Indian Government)

ICICI is not an Indian government owned bank but it comes under the jurisdiction of Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI must enforce the use of state languages in all banks operating in India.

3.10 Where is State Language in Bank Pass Books?

At Indian government owned banks you can update automated passbooks in Hindi or English only. (India Express; January 28, 2017)

3.11 Lawsuit for Bank Forms in State Language

A public interest litigation petition has been filed in the Madras High Court seeking a direction to the Union Finance Ministry and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to ensure that all kinds of challans, forms and applications in public sector as well as private banks were printed in Tamil also in addition to English and Hindi. (The Hindu; March 6, 2017)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has told the Madras High Court Bench that it had issued a circular way back in December 2005 itself instructing the banks in the country to use English, Hindi as well as the regional language in all printed materials, including account opening forms, pay-in slips, passbooks and so on used by the customers. (The Hindu; July 7, 2017)

What is the use if banks do not follow RBI circulars? What is the purpose of RBI issuing circulars if banks do not follow them? RBI has dozens of Official Language Officers (Rajbasha Adhikaris) with the sole responsibility of making sure that more and more Hindi is used in banks. Appoint an officer in each state to enforce RBI rules on the use of state language. Why this step-motherly treatment of non-Hindi languages. We pay taxes too.

(First Published: February 2019)

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9.

Hindi Imposition through Banking Jobs

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Syndicate Bank does the Dirty Job
2. Arrogant, Imperial Nature of the Order
3. This is not a Victory
4. Final words

1. Syndicate Bank does the Dirty Job

Syndicate Bank WAS a private bank established in 1925 in Udupi, Karnataka State (a non-Hindi state). Indian Government, under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, nationalized it and 13 other banks in 1969 because of political and economic reasons. Thus the Indian Government became the owner and operator of the bank. As usual, once the Indian Government gets its hands on something, it becomes a vehicle for imposing Hindi on non-Hindi peoples.

Syndicate Bank and the other government-controlled banks **forced its non-Hindi employees to learn Hindi, pass Hindi examinations and write a certain percentage of correspondence in Hindi** (even if the bank branch is located in non-Hindi regions). This imposition and hardship to non-Hindi employees is going on for years but not many people other than those employees know of it. Employees silently bear the extra burden.

In August 2007, Syndicate Bank branch office in Puducherry required that anyone applying for clerical posts must have a Hindi proficiency certificate. Puducherry is a Tamil area and very few people know Hindi. This is a further push into the Hindi imposition territory by Indian Government (Presently Indian government owns over 65% of the bank shares, and thus controls its operations and sets bank policies.)

Puducherry Bank Staff Association staged a demonstration against this order on August 13, 2007. Dalit Panthers of India (DPI), a political party in Tamil Nadu, announced a demonstration for August 20, 2007. Seeing the demonstrations and fearing that they may spread, Syndicate Bank withdrew the order.

2. Arrogant, Imperial Nature of the Order

We want to highlight the arrogant, imperialist nature of this order. A Tamil employee working in a Tamil area where few people know Hindi is required to have proficiency in Hindi (whether forced to learn after becoming an employee or required to have proficiency to apply for the job). However there is no condition that he/she should have proficiency in Tamil. A few years ago I went to a Canara Bank branch in Thanjavur. The

person I talked to did not know Tamil. We were able to communicate because we both knew English. There are people in Tamilnadu who do not know English. They cannot talk to this man even though the bank branch is in Tamil Nadu. Yet a Hindi speaker from Uttar Pradesh can come to this branch, over a thousand miles away from his homeland, and talk and do business with any bank employee in Hindi. Why are we, the Tamil people, accepting this outrageously discriminatory policy of the Indian Government?

Our position is that there should be no requirement to learn Hindi before or after becoming an employee of Indian government establishments unless the office is located in a Hindi region. There should be a requirement to learn the local language. That is logical; that is fair. Anything else is Hindi imposition and we oppose it.

3. This is not a Victory

Yes, Puducherry Bank Staff Association's demonstration and proposed Dalit Panthers of India (DPI) demonstration forced Syndicate Bank to withdraw the outrageous order. We should not think of this as a victory over Hindi imposition. It is not a victory on two counts.

1) Non-Hindi bank employees are still forced to learn Hindi and pass examinations. That is a burden on us. **Why should non-Hindi employees be burdened with learning Hindi? They could use that time to learn computer programming or accounting or business management or other such professional courses to improve their skills and get ahead in the job market.**

2) Indian Government has the habit of **Backing off when their Hindi imposition is exposed and coming back again elsewhere or later**. Here is an example. Indian government operated Television Doordarshan Cheenai Kendra (DD Chennai) used to broadcast news in Tamil during the prime night time when many people watch television. In the mid-1980s, it moved the Tamil news to a later time when fewer people watch television and started broadcasting Hindi news at that time. Many Tamils in the Chennai area did not like this change because most Tamils did not understand Hindi.

We want to point out that Doordarshan Cheenai Kendra (DD Chennai) broadcasts can be viewed only in the Chennai where Tamil is the local language and few people know Hindi. So it does not make sense to replace Tamil news with Hindi news. Also national broadcasts of Doordarshan that are seen all over India, including the Chennai area, broadcasts Hindi news around that time too. So what is the need to replace Tamil news with Hindi news in the prime night time at DD Chennai? Arrogance and audacity.

The then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran (MGR) protested the change from Tamil news to Hindi news. A word from this immensely popular chief minister could bring throngs of Tamils into the street in protest against this "Hindi imposition". Fearing massive protests Indian government backed off and put Tamil news back into its original time slot. Then several years, after the passing away of Mr. Ramachandran,

Hindi news was brought back to prime television time and Tamil news was relegated back to a later time.

4. Final Words

Is there an end to more and more Hindi imposition? Is there a way out of it for the Tamil people? Or, **are we forever to carry the extra burden of Hindi?** Are non-Hindi employees of Indian government establishments forever to spend time on studying Hindi instead of using that time to learn more useful subjects like computer programming, accounting or business management that may advance their career. Remember, Hindi employees do not have this burden of Hindi and may use the time to relax, enjoy life or study more useful subjects.

(First Published: October 2007)

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10.

Carrots and Cash Awards to Promote Hindi: Direct and Indirect Cost to Taxpayers

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
 2. Rajbhasha Shields
 3. Rajbhasha Awards
 4. Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna
 5. Medini Puraskar Yojna
 6. Scientific Content Writing Competition
 7. More Awards for Writing Hindi Books and Articles
 8. Incentive Programmes for Passing Hindi Examinations
 9. Awards for Hindi Typing, Stenography and Dictation
 10. Home Ministry's Award Scheme
 11. Prizes for Using Hindi at Railway Offices
 12. Awards at Reserve Bank of India
 13. Indirect Cost of Hindi Imperialism
- ADDENDUM: One More Thought

1. Introduction

Indian government in its zealousness to make its employees do more and more work in Hindi uses carrots and sticks -- inducements and punishments.

Managers at Tamil Nadu offices of the Southern Railways received a memorandum in late 2003. In addition to telling them that 50% of the work should be done in Hindi, the memorandum also says that employees not attending Hindi training classes "should be severely dealt with". This is the punishment strategy of Hindi imposition. Then there are awards and cash prizes to those who work in Hindi; these are the carrots.

This article lists some of the awards and cash prizes offered. These awards and prizes are given not only to Indian government employees but also to employees at Indian government undertakings (public sector companies) such as nationalized banks, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) and National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), and central educational institutions such as Central Universities (CU), Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), Indian Institutes of Management (IIM), etc., etc. We discuss the direct and indirect cost of these awards (actually the **indirect costs are far more than the direct cost**) later in Section 13. First, examples of these awards are listed in Sections 2 to 12. We grouped the 28 examples under 11 categories. Note that this is not a complete list, it is only a partial list.

2. Rajbhasha Shields

Every year Indian government offices and offices of Indian government undertakings (numbering into several 100s) are ranked on their performance in using Hindi in their offices. Top ranked offices are awarded the Rajbhasha Shields. Managers of these awards are presented with these shields at functions often attended by ministers or top officials. The ranking is based on number of documents written in Hindi and then translated to English instead of written in English and then translated to Hindi, number of memoranda in Hindi, number of dictations made in Hindi, number of side notes made in Hindi, etc. Some of the offices that had received this shield in the past years include the following (not a complete list).

2.1

Some offices of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Ministry of Science and Technology. This is a highly technical organization. Their scientists and managers should be spending time to research and develop useful scientific innovations instead of increasing the number of memoranda written in Hindi, number of side notes made in Hindi, etc. This is especially time consuming (time wasting) for non-Hindi scientists, managers, administrators and clerical staff, resulting in reduced productivity thus costing the country millions of Rupees. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) should concentrate on scientific research and not using more and more Hindi.

2.2

Some Central Universities. Indian government established these central universities saying that they provide higher quality education than state universities. Hindi imperialism shows its head wherever Indian government goes. What is the need for more and more Hindi in central universities located in non-Hindi states? Use the money to provide high quality education instead of squandering it on promoting more Hindi use. We have no problem using more Hindi in Hindi states but not in non-Hindi states.

2.3

Some Indian Institutes of Management (IIM)

2.4

Some Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT)

2.5

Some nationalized banks. What is the need for more use of Hindi in banks located in non-Hindi states? Instead evaluate and rank banks according to how many employees know the state language and how much work is performed in the state language.

3. Rajbhasha Awards

Indian Government's Department of Official Language instituted "Rajbhasha Awards" in 2017 to recognize the excellent contribution of ministries, departments and nationalized banks in the field of Hindi. (theindianawaaz.com; September 14, 2017).

4. Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna

There are 3 different categories of Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna Prizes for authors of Hindi books and articles.

4.1 Category 1

Under the Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna scheme, working or retired Indian government officers are awarded prizes for original writing in Hindi. First Prize - 100000 Rupees; Second Prize - 75000 Rupees; Third Prize - 60000 Rupees, Consolation Prize - 30000 Rupees. Both Hindi and non-Hindi tax payers' money is used for developing Hindi. What about the other languages?

4.2 Category 2

There is another award also under Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna. It is awarded to Indian citizens for original writing in Hindi on various streams of modern knowledge and science. First Prize - 200000 Rupees, Second Prize - 125000 Rupees, Third Prize - 75000 Rupees, Ten Consolation Prizes - 10000 Rupees. Again, what about other languages?

4.3 Category 3

Another Rajbhasha Gaurav Puruskar Yojna is for authors of outstanding articles in Hindi. First Prize - 20000 Rupees, Second Prize - 18000 Rupees, Third Prize - 15000 Rupees. Because of criticism that these writing awards are only for Hindi, Indian government added a new category for authors of outstanding articles in non-Hindi languages. First Prize - 25000 Rupees, Second Prize - 22000 Rupees, Third Prize - 20000 Rupees.

This is a cunning, tricky way to appease criticism of ignoring non-Hindi languages. Prizes for non-Hindi articles are higher than for Hindi articles. Do not jump up and applaud. While three prizes (first, second and third) are awarded just for Hindi, three prizes are awarded for all the other Indian languages combined. Indian constitution lists 22 languages including Hindi. So three prizes for Hindi articles and three prizes for articles in 21 other languages combined. Is it fair? Also, remember, while there are awards for writing Hindi books, there is no such award for non-Hindi books.

5. Medini Puraskar Yojna Award

Indian Government Environmental Ministry re-introduced the Medini Puraskar Yojna Award in 2018 to encourage original Hindi books on environmental topics. 100000 Rupees, 75000 Rupees and 50000 Rupees and 25000 Rupees would be the first, second, third and consolation prices. (Press Trust of India; May 4, 2018)

Books may discuss topics such as environment protection, pollution control, environmental impact assessment, ecological restoration and development, forest conservation, forest resources and development, protection of wildlife, bio-diversity and climate change.

6. Scientific Content Writing Competition

In September 2016, Indian government announced a Scientific Content Writing Competition (in Hindi and English) to explain to "masses" the scientific facts on how male and female sexes are determined during pregnancy. The objective is to remove the harassment of women as solely responsible for bearing female children.
(IndianBioScience.org; September 2016)

Why is the competition in Hindi and English only? The information would benefit only Hindi people and English-knowing non-Hindi people. If Indian government is for the benefit of all Indians, why are non-Hindi "masses" left out? Are non-Hindi women any less than Hindi women?

7. More Awards for Writing Hindi Books and Articles

In addition to those discussed in Sections 4 to 6, there are several other awards for writing Hindi books and articles. Here are some examples.

7.1

Award for writing original Hindi books on economics related subjects

7.2

Award for writing original Hindi books on technical subjects

7.3

Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar Award to the writers of outstanding work in promoting the progressive use of Hindi in ministries, departments, public sector undertakings (PSU), banks and in-house Hindi magazines. (This award was known as Indira Gandhi Rajbhasha Award until 2015.)

7.4

Railway Minister Hindi Essay Competition (essays pertaining to railway subject)

7.5

Railways: Cash award scheme for writing story, novel and poetry in Hindi (Premchand Award Scheme (story books or novels), Maithilisharan Gupta Award (poetry)). Why is the Railway Ministry awarding prizes for Hindi novels, stories and poetry?

8. Incentive Programmes for Passing Hindi Examinations

8.1

Indian government employees passing Hindi examinations are given pay equivalent to one increment for 12 months.

8.2

Additionally, Indian Government employees who pass Hindi Prabodh, Hindi Praveen, Hindi Pragya , Hindi Word Processing/Hindi Typing and Hindi Stenography examinations with good marks are given cash awards depending on the examination and the percentage mark obtained.

8.3

Indian Government introduced a 160-hour "high level" course (Parangat course) in April 2015. The home ministry sent a letter to all ministries in February 2016 proposing that employees scoring 55-69 per cent marks be given cash awards. All Indian government employees possessing "working knowledge of Hindi" are supposed to take this Parangat course. (Economic Times; February 27, 2016)

8.4

I suggest that, instead of paying cash prizes for passing Hindi examinations, pay cash prizes for passing similar examinations in the language of the state where they work. It is more useful for a bank or railway or Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) employee in a non-Hindi state to know the state language than Hindi.

9. Awards for Hindi Typing, Stenography and Dictation

9.1

Stenographers whose mother tongue is not Hindi are given personal pay equal in amount to two increments for the first 12 months and one for the next 12 months on passing Hindi stenography examination

9.2

Honorarium (money) to typists and stenographers for doing day-to-day official work in Hindi.

9.3

Incentive Scheme for Officers: Incentive awards to Hindi speaking officers for giving dictation in Hindi for a minimum of 20,000 words in a calendar year. Non-Hindi speaking officers for giving dictation in Hindi for a minimum of 10,000 words per calendar year.

10. Home Ministry's Award Scheme

10.1

Awards for officers and employees working in regions A and B for writing minimum 20,000 words.

10.2

Awards for officers and employees working in region C for writing minimum 10,000 words in Hindi per year.

10.3

Collective Cash Award Scheme: Three departments in the Home Ministry are awarded for doing commendable and maximum work in Hindi.

11. Prizes for Using Hindi at Railway Offices

11.1

Railways: Noting and Drafting Competitions: These competitions are conducted at Zonal and Railway Board level.

11.2

Railways: Typewriting competition at Zonal levels.

11.3

Railway Board's Individual Cash Award Scheme: Every year 135 officers/employees are awarded cash prizes for doing commendable and maximum work in Hindi.

11.4

In addition to the above Railway Board' award, General Manager's Individual Cash Award Scheme: Every year 10 officers/employees in South Western Railway are awarded for doing commendable and maximum official work in Hindi.

11.5

Instead of giving prizes to railway employees for using Hindi, give prizes for using the state language. That would benefit passengers. Goal of Indian Railways should be making rail travel easy, and not to thrust Hindi into non-Hindi states.

12. Awards at Reserve Bank of India

12.1

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor announced in May 2016 three new awards of 1.25 lakh Rupees (125000 Rupees) each for original Hindi books on economics, banking and finance.

12.2

Reserve Bank of India announced in August 2016 the "Inter-Bank Hindi Essay Competition of Reserve Bank of India". All public sector banks were requested to publicize the competition in their offices.

13. Indirect Cost of Hindi Imperialism

The awards and prizes mentioned in this article is only a partial list. There are many more. The direct cost of all these awards and prizes may add up to a few crore Rupees (1 crore = 10 million). That is small compared the Indian government budget. But the indirect cost of these awards is enormous.

Some department and office managers try to win the majors like the Rajbhasha Shields that are often awarded by ministers or senior officials at gala functions. These managers push their employees to do more and more work in Hindi in order to get these shields. When non-Hindi employees do work in Hindi, **their productivity is decreased** and that cost is hundreds of times the cost of the Rajbhasha Shields.

When non-Hindi typists, stenographers and other employees do more in Hindi in order to get the cash incentives, their productivity decreases. When non-Hindi managers give dictation in Hindi to get cash incentives, **their productivity decreases**. Loss of productivity means additional costs **amounting to thousands of crores of Rupees**. Of course, **taxpayers** pay for the loss of productivity. Why should non-Hindi taxpayers pay for the enthronement of Hindi?

We would have no objection if efforts are made in Hindi states to use more and more Hindi in their state offices with state government taxes. Non-Hindi taxpayers do not want their hard earned money used to propagate someone else's language all over India.

ADDENDUM: One More Thought

Indian government forces its employees to learn Hindi, pass Hindi examinations and do more and more work in Hindi. At the same times, no such effort is made to encourage its employees to learn the language of the state where they are working. This leads to hardships to local people in dealing with employees of nationalized banks, railway, central security forces like the Coast Guards, Railway Protection Force and Central Industrial Security Force.

Here is a tragic example. Indian Coast Guard is spending money and time on holding Hindi Poetry Festivals (Hindi Kavi Sammelan) (Twitter Message from Indian Coast Guard; March 21-22, 2018). What is the function (or mission) of Indian Coastguards? To protect the coast and the people of the coast. In my widest stretch of imagination I cannot think how a Hindi Kavi Sammelan helps the coastguards in their mission. Instead of holding Hindi Poetry Festivals (Hindi Kavi Sammelan), teach the coastguards the local language--language of the people it is supposed to serve and protect.

A Tamil Nadu fisherman died from Sri Lankan Navy shooting in March 2017 because Indian Coast Guard ship nearby could not understand a distress phone call from fishermen in Tamil; the fishermen did not know Hindi or English [References 1, 2]. End the awards and prizes for Hindi proficiency and Hindi use; instead require Indian government employees to learn the language of the local people.

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(First Published: February 2019)

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11.

Hindi in Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC)

Neyveli P. K. Nedumaran

[This chapter is included in Volume 14 also because of its relevance there.]

In March 2008, Managing Director of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) reported that 40% of the official communication in the corporation is carried out in Hindi and hoped to meet the target of 55% as set forth by the Indian Government. (Neyveli Lignite Corporation, located in Neyveli, Tamil Nadu, is an Indian Government undertaking and it has to perform certain stipulated percentage of work in Hindi.)

We ask those Tamilnadu politicians who claim that there is no Hindi imposition: "Is it not Hindi imposition?" Forty percent of communications are written in Hindi means, Neyveli Lignite Corporation employees are compelled to write those correspondence in Hindi whether they want to or not. I work at NLC and I was told by my supervisor that I MUST write certain letters in Hindi (Neyveli Nedumaran is an assumed name to protect my employment). I know that almost all non-Hindi employees, if given a choice between Hindi and English, would write everything in English. We are compelled to work in Hindi. Even after passing the required Hindi examination (as I was compelled to do to receive annual salary increments), it is not easy to write in Hindi.

It takes more time and effort for me and other non-Hindi employees to write in Hindi compared to employees whose mother tongue is Hindi. Yet we are expected to do the same amount of work as Hindi speakers and how much work we do matters when it comes to salaries and promotions. If still we (non-Hindi employees) advance in Indian government undertakings, it is a testament to our extra hard work compared to Hindi speakers. Why can't we all do the work in English? All of us here have learned English in schools and college whether from Hindi states or non-Hindi states. In this global economy English is something we need. What is the need for Hindi other than it helps Hindi speakers?

We put up with this language discrimination silently because we need the job to feed our families. Is there any honourable politician left in Tamil Nadu to spearhead a movement to stop the forced use of Hindi in central government and public sector undertakings like Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Life Insurance Corporation, Indian Railways and Indian Government owned banks?

(First Published: July 2008)

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12.

India: Tamil IAS Officer Scolded for not Speaking "Good" Hindi

P. N.

Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers are the cream of Indian civil service. They go through a tough competitive examination and only a small percentage are selected for the service. They are employed both at the Indian Central Government and at the State Governments at senior administrative positions. With years and experience they move to higher and higher responsibilities.

Indian government tells Tamil Nadu that there is no Hindi imposition. The following incidence at the highest level of Indian government shows that even senior non-Hindi IAS officers are forced to make presentations in Hindi and even scolded for not speaking "good Hindi".

June 3, 1990 issue of Illustrated Weekly of India reported an incidence involving the then Indian Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal. This is the gist of the article. Devi Lal was known to scold IAS officers from non-Hindi areas for not speaking in "good Hindi" (remember, the officers are speaking in Hindi but not in "good Hindi"). One day an IAS officer, Mr. Gitakrishnan, was to make a presentation to Prime Minister V. P. Singh and Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal and some others. When his turn came to make the presentation Gitakrishnan told the Prime Minister that he would rather not make the presentation because his Hindi is not good enough to meet the Deputy Prime Minister's standard. Before Devi Lal could burst in anger, as some expected, V. P. Singh rushed in and told Gitakrishnan that he may make his presentation in English.

Do not jump to the conclusion that non-Hindi IAS officers have the option to make presentations in English. Not so. This above incidence was an exception and not the norm; Prime Minister V. P. Singh diplomatically interfered to prevent a unpleasant confrontation between a senior IAS officer and Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal.

Obviously Gitakrishnan and other IAS officers were made to make Hindi presentations before Dei Lal in the past and were scolded for not speaking good Hindi. Obviously Gitakrishnan was not happy with this treatment and made this opportune moment in front of the prime minister to passively resist it. He was a very senior IAS officer holding a secretary-level position and, obviously, a very courageous man. He might have only a few more years to retirement. Even if transferred to a less desirable position, he may weather it for that short while. How many middle-level IAS officers would dare to "challenge" the Deputy Prime Minister or for that matter other Hindi chauvinist ministers? Any IAS officer confronting a minister on any issue may find himself/herself transferred to less desirable positions.

What the above Devi Lal incidence shows are these: IAS officers from non-Hindi areas are forced to make presentations in Hindi (although every prime minister of India had

assured Tamil Nadu that Hindi would not be imposed on non-Hindi peoples). IAS officers were even scolded for not speaking good Hindi.

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13.

Hindi Employees Outnumber Tamils in Indian Government Income Tax Office in Tamil Nadu

T. Ganesan

Indian Government Income Tax Office in Chennai (located in Nungampaakam) has 200 middle level officers. 160 of those 200 are from Hindi-belt states. Is it that Hindi-belt candidates are brilliant accountants compared to others? No. The reason is that selection examinations for these positions were held in English and Hindi. When Hindi-belt employees have the advantage of writing the examinations in Hindi, others have to write in one of two alien languages: English or Hindi. How is it fair?

After much pressure from Tamil Nadu politicians, some Government of India employment examinations are held in mother tongue also. But Hindi politicians who dominate and control the Indian parliament do not want to give up the advantages Hindi people enjoy and resist allowing mother tongue for many Indian Government examinations.

(First Published: March 2009)

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14. **Doctor, Learn Hindi or You are Fired!**

K. N. Nair

I am from Kerala. Malayalam is my mother tongue. My sister is a medical doctor. She recently applied for a medical officer job with Government of India (central government job). Do you know that a condition for employment as a medical officer is: "**A candidate will be required to pass the examination in Hindi of an approved standard within the period of probation and failure to do so shall involve liability to termination of service.**" I can understand it if her job is in a Hindi-speaking area or state. That is not the case; medical officers posted in non-Hindi states are also required to pass a Hindi examination.

Why should a doctor working in a non-Hindi state like Karnataka has to pass an examination in Hindi or otherwise fired from the job? A reasonable and justifiable requirement should be that the doctor should learn the local language. For example, if a Malayali doctor works in West Bengal, she/he must be required to learn Bengali. If a Malayali doctor works in Kerala, she/he should know Malayalam. If a Malayali doctor works in Hindi-speaking Uttar Pradesh, she/he should learn Hindi. But the Indian government is dominated and controlled by Hindi politicians and so it requires a Malayali doctor to pass an examination in Hindi whether she works in Malayalam-speaking Kerala or Tamil-speaking Tamil Nadu or Bengali-speaking West Bengal or Kannada-speaking Karnataka. This is outrageous arrogance on the part of Hindi politicians.

Indian government's Hindi imposition is irrational and is evoking resentment and anger in people like me.

(First Published: August 2002)

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15.

Indian Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Dominated by Hindi Speakers

Thanjai Nalankilli

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) comes under the jurisdiction of the Central Government of India. I have stated before that CRPF has disproportionately high proportion of personnel from the Hindi belt and nearby states whose languages are close to Hindi. In June 2003 CRPF confirmed that the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are under-represented and the states of Bihar, Haryana, Madya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh are disproportionately over-represented. CRPF said that the southern states are under-represented because many who applied for jobs from these states did not meet the required physical fitness standards. Is it really the only reason or is there more to it?

In a previous article "Why India's Official Language Policy is Unfair to Non-Hindi Peoples" [Volume 1-Chapter 2], we presented the following data: "Out of the 1885 candidates who passed Indian Government Clerical and Stenographer examinations held in 2002, less than 100 are from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu." Obviously the poor showing of candidates from the southern states has nothing to do with physical fitness (there were no physical examinations to pass). As we pointed out in that article, disproportionately large numbers of candidates from the Hindi-speaking states passed the examinations because they could answer the questions in their mother tongue Hindi, whereas southerners have to answer in either Hindi or English, both of which are foreign to them.

That is the same reason for the low pass rate of southern candidates for the Central Reserve Police Force also. Candidates have to answer examinations either in Hindi or English. So the Hindi region candidates have an unfair advantage. It is also interesting that candidates from **Andhra Pradesh, Karntaka and Kerala did as badly as those from Tamil Nadu, although Hindi is a compulsory subject in schools in those states.** So what is needed is not teaching Hindi in schools (evidently it did not help Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala) but all central government examinations should be held in mother tongues. Despite many requests, the Hindi politicians who dominate the Indian parliament and thus control the Indian Government refuse to allow that.

Even the fortunate candidates who pass the examinations have a hard time once they are in the job. They were forced to pass Hindi examinations (even if they were posted in non-Hindi states) and asked to write a certain percentage of letters and reports in Hindi [Volume 5-Chapter 17 (see Table 1)]. This policy should also be stopped. Otherwise Hindi speakers get an unfair advantage in the work place in central government jobs. Will it happen? If there is lot of protest, some entrance examinations may be held in the mother tongue but forcing employees to pass Hindi examinations and working at least in part in Hindi would not change. That is an **unfair burden on non-Hindi employees and is reducing the number of promotions and advancement of these employees.**

(First Published: August 2004)

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16. **Hindi in Southern Railways**

AT

Railways are a monopoly in India. It is owned and operated by the Indian Government. Southern Railways serves the southern states (Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana). As with other Indian government departments and undertakings, Indian Government uses Southern Railways also to spread Hindi in non-Hindi states and to force non-Hindi employees to learn Hindi (although they serve in a region where people's mother tongue is not Hindi, where very few people know Hindi and work can be carried out 100% without Hindi). All managers working in Tamil Nadu offices of the Southern Railways received a memorandum in late 2003. (Similar memorandum must have been sent to offices in the other southern, non-Hindi states also.) Here are some pertinent points from the memorandum, under the heading "Important Directions Regarding Official Language Policy".

1.
At least 55% of all letters written in offices in Tamil Nadu to other offices (including offices in Tamil Nadu) should be in Hindi. [Author's Comment: We wonder why more than half the letters written from an office in Chennai, Tamil Nadu to Madurai, Tamil Nadu or from Trichi, Tamil Nadu to Kanyakumari Tamil Nadu should be in Hindi. Is it not Hindi imposition?]
2.
At least 50% of typewriters purchased in Tamilnadu offices should be Hindi typewriters. At least 50% of books purchased in Tamil Nadu offices should be Hindi books. [Author's Comment: A good bonanza for Hindi writers.]
3.
In addition to the above quota for Hindi use in Tamil Nadu, there is also a threat to employees not learning Hindi. **The memorandum says that employees not attending Hindi training classes "should be severely dealt with".**

Hindi politicians and their cohorts coming to Tamilnadu during election times invariably say, "Hindi will not be imposed in Tamil Nadu". Once they get elected and form government in New Delhi they give directives to all departments and undertakings to force Hindi down the throat of Tamil employees working in Tamil Nadu offices of the Indian Government.

(First Published: October 2004)

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17.

Government of India's Hindi Imposition Agenda for 2002-2003

M. T.

Although this article discusses the 2002-2003 "Hindi Imposition Agenda", similar documents are published every year as "Annual Programme of the Department of Official Language". You may be able to access them on the Internet.

Outline

1. Introduction
2. Regions A, B and C
3. Detailed Discussion of the Hindi Imposition Agenda for 2002-2003
4. Enforcement of the Hindi Imposition Agenda
5. Comments

1. Introduction

Do you know that the Government of India prepares an agenda for Hindi imposition every year? It is true! Of course, they do not call it "Hindi Imposition Agenda". They call it the "Annual Programme of the Department of Official Language". When you read it, it becomes evident that this is in fact a Hindi imposition agenda. It presents (in their own words) "an intensive and comprehensive programme for speeding up the propagation of Hindi". Objective of this program is (in their own words) "to speed up our efforts in our march towards achieving the **goal of replacing the use of English language by Hindi** for official purposes of the union".

This annual program is the result of the Official Language Resolution passed by the Hindi-dominated Indian Parliament in 1968. This resolution says, "a more intensive and comprehensive programme shall be prepared and implemented by the Government of India for accelerating the spread and development of Hindi and its progressive use for the various official purposes of the Union and an annual assessment report giving details of the measures taken and the progress achieved shall be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament and sent to all State Governments". Such a program (agenda) is prepared and implemented every year since 1968. This agenda is not presented to the parliament and it is kept out of public eye as much as possible, lest it stirs trouble in non-Hindi states, especially Tamil Nadu. But it is sent to every manager in the employ of the Indian Government and Indian Government undertakings such as the Indian Government owned banks (example: State Bank of India), Life Insurance Corporation of India, etc. The top of the circular sent with this Annual Program says, "**All Ministries/ Departments/ Offices are expected to comply with the programme with utmost devotion**". Several thousand Rajbhasha Adhikaris (official language officers) monitor closely if the goals set forth in the program are met [see Chapter 5 of this volume for details]. In fact, a manager is more likely to get into trouble and chastised if he/she does not meet the "Hindi use" goals than

if he/she fails to meet other project objectives (for example, not meeting the goal of laying a center number of kilometers of rail lines).

The Department of Official Language within the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India is responsible for enforcing the use of Hindi (in other words, "Hindi imposition") in all departments and corporations / undertakings / banks, etc. of central government of India. When unwilling employees are forced to use Hindi, then it is Hindi imposition. Note that Hindi imposition is not limited to central government offices but also offices of the corporations, undertaking and banks the central government owns or controls. These include, for example, Life Insurance Corporation of India, State Bank of India, etc.

2. Regions A, B and C

The Department of Official Language divides the various states of the "Indian Union" into three regions.

Region A: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh.

Region B: Chandigarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab.

Region C: All other states and Union Territories where knowledge of Hindi is limited (for example, all southern and eastern states. In the following discussion we limit ourselves to Indian Governments agenda for Hindi use in Region C that includes all Southern and eastern states where Hindi knowledge is limited.

Required use of Hindi in Regions B and C are equal or more than those required for Region C.

3. Detailed Discussion of the Hindi Imposition Agenda for 2002-2003

The following information is taken from the document "Annual Programme 2002-2003" issued by the Department of Official Language in March 2002. This document presents the required use of Hindi for the one-year period from April 2002 to March 2003. Please note that the following Table excerpted from that document is the target for Region C (that includes all Southern and Eastern States where the knowledge of Hindi is limited). The target for the states in Regions B and C are usually higher.

TABLE - 1

Targets for 2002 - 2003 for the implementation of official language policy in ministries/ departments & their attached/sub-ordinate offices & corporations / undertakings / banks etc. of central government in **Region C (where Hindi knowledge is limited such as Southern and Eastern States and Union territories)**.

1. Originating Correspondence in Hindi (including Letters, Telegrams, Wireless, Telex, Fax, Drawings etc.): 55%
2. Hindi Typists, Stenographers & Devnagri Typewriters: 55%
3. Hindi Training: 65%
4. Expenditure for the purchase of Hindi books out of the total Library grant: 50%
5. Joint inspections by the officers of the concerned departments & those of the Department of Official Language of Foreign based Undertakings/Offices etc. owned or controlled by the Central Government: At least one inspection in a year
6. Meetings regarding Official Language
 - (A) Hindi Salahkar Samiti: 4 meetings in a year (one meeting every quarter)
 - (B) Town Official Language Implementation Committee: 2 meetings in a year (One meeting every 6 months)
 - (C) Official Language Implementation Committee: 4 meetings in a year (One meeting every quarter)
7. Translation of Codes, Manuals, Forms, Procedural literature: 100%
8. Sections of the Ministries/Departments where entire work to be done in Hindi: Minimum 7 Sections

We are not going to discuss each and every item listed above. We will just look at couple of them. Item 1 says 55% of all correspondence should be in Hindi. That means, more than half of all correspondence (55% to be precise) between, for example, the Southern Railways Office in Chennai to small, rural Railway Station Masters in Tamil Nadu must be written in Hindi. What is the purpose other than imposing Hindi on non-Hindi employees and displaying the power of Hindi in India?

Similarly more than half the letters written by employees working at the State Bank of India offices in Tamil Nadu must be in Hindi even if that letter is going to another office located in Tamil Nadu. More than half the letters written by Life Insurance Corporation of India employees in Tamil Nadu should be in Hindi. Is this not Hindi imposition?

Look at this another way. Tamil central government employees working in an office in Tamil Nadu writing to other Tamils in Tamil Nadu must write in Hindi at least 55% of the time. Of course, the goal is to make it 100% as soon as possible! A memorandum from the Department of Official Language to managerial central government employees says, "**It is the constitutional obligation of all officers and staff to do their official work in Hindi language**".

We also want to point out Item 4. It stipulates that at least half the books (50%) purchase using central government Library Grants in Region C offices should be Hindi books. Remember Region C are states where Hindi knowledge is limited (includes Southern and Eastern states).

We will not discuss the other items here. Readers may read them through and see how vigorously Hindi is imposed through central government offices and corporations / undertakings / banks under central government control.

4. Enforcement of the Hindi Imposition Agenda

In Section 3, we presented the targets for Hindi use for April 2002 to March 2003. It is the duty of the Administrative Head of each office to see to it that the targets are met. A letter to the Administrative Heads from the Department of Official Language minces no words about it. It says, "It should be clearly understood that according to the Official Language Rules, 1976, the **responsibility for the compliance of the Official Language Policy rests with the Administrative Head of each office**. Other senior officers in the department should also comply with and ensure compliance of orders relating to the use of official language." As we said in Section 1, there are Rajbhasha Adhikaris (official language officers) in each office and they act like overlords to supervise the Hindi use and report on errant Administrative Heads to the Department of Official Language.

There are strict procedures to ensure that Hindi is used as targeted. Every office should submit a progress report every three months to the Department of Official Language, giving the following information. This includes central government offices as well as offices of corporations / undertakings / banks under central government control

TABLE 2

Quarterly Progress Report regarding Progressive Use of Official Language Hindi
Following information must be submitter 4 times a year.

1.
 - (a) Total number of documents issued
 - (b) Total number of documents issued in English only (Documents include "General Orders, Memorandums, Resolutions, Notifications, Rules, Agreements, Contracts, Tenders, Notices, Parliament Questions, etc.")
 2.
 - (a) Total Number of letters received in Hindi
 - (b) Out of these how many replied to in English (Letters include Telegrams, Telex and Fax.)

3.

(a) Total Number of letters issued

(b) Percentage of letters issued in Hindi (Letters include Telegrams, Telex and Fax)

4.

(a) Total number of files opened

(b) In how many files noting are being made in Hindi

5.

(a) Number of Hindi workshops organized

(b) Number of officers/officials trained in those workshops

6.

(a) Number of top administrative meetings held

(b) In how many meetings discussions/proceedings were in Hindi

7.

Brief description of the specific achievements/work regarding Implementation of the Official Language Policy during the 3-month period.

There is an Official Languages Implementation Committee in each office and this committee shall meet at least 4 times a year to make sure Hindi is used per target requirements. At least once a year officers from the Department of Official Language come down from New Delhi to offices of the central government as well as offices of corporations, undertakings and banks controlled by the central government in Tamil Nadu on "Inspection Visits" to assure that Hindi use (Hindi imposition) is progressing as scheduled. Pity the Administrative Heads of offices that fall short. They get a thorough "talking to" and they will also feel the impact on their promotions (or denial of promotions) and salary increments. A letter from the Department of Official Language warns the Administrative Heads that, **"Laxity in compliance of the Government Orders (about Hindi use) shall not be accepted"**.

4. Comments

You have now read the program for 2002-2003 as well as how rigorous steps are taken to implement the program. As we noted in Section 1, such Hindi Imposition Agenda are prepared and circulated every year since 1968. Tell me, is this Hindi imposition or not? Is it not Hindi imposition when a non-Hindi employee is told that he/she has to prepare certain percentage of documents in Hindi (irrespective of whether he/she wants to or not)?

This annual program of systematic Hindi Imposition started from 1968. Prime Ministers of India between 1968 and now (May 2002) are Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, Rajiv Gandhi, Vishwanath Pratap Singh (V. P. Singh), P. V. Narasimha Rao, Chandra Shekhar, H. D. Deve Gowda, Inder Kumar Gujral (I. K. Gujral) and Atal Behari Vajpayee. Every one of these Prime Ministers has assured us that there was no Hindi imposition and that there would be no Hindi imposition. Are their promises worth anything at all? How can non-Hindi peoples believe anything Indian Indian Prime Ministers say?

(First Published: May 2002)

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18.

Outrageous Discrimination of Non-Hindi Students in IAS Examinations

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. The Preliminary Examination
4. English Comprehension Test
5. Two Stories to Illustrate the Discrimination
 - 5.1 Story of the Step Mother
 - 5.2 Story of the One-Kilometer Race
6. Closing Thoughts

ABBREVIATIONS

CSE - Civil Service Examinations
IAS - Indian Administrative Service
IFS - Indian Foreign Service
IPS - Indian Police Service

1. Introduction

There are many laws, regulations, requirements and procedures in the Indian Government offices that discriminate against non-Hindi citizens of India. Here we present one example that, in my opinion, is outrageous, obvious and open discrimination of non-Hindi students seeking employment with the Indian Government. This is just one example of systematic discrimination of many.

2. Background

Indian Administrative Service (IAS) positions (jobs) are the most sought after positions in the central and state governments in India. Candidates are selected for these positions through Civil Service Examinations (CSE). Any Indian citizen of age 21 or over with a bachelors degree can write these examinations and the top rank holders are selected for the jobs. For example, if 1000 jobs are expected in a given year, the top 1000 candidates are selected out of the many thousands that take the examination. IAS jobs are so lucrative and coveted that even people with medical and engineering degrees compete in these examinations, and if selected for IAS jobs, leave their medical and engineering careers. So, it is important that these the Civil Service Examinations (CSE) are conducted in a fair manner that there is no discrimination on the basis of language or state of residence. Yet these examinations are outrageously tilted in favor of students whose

mother tongue is Hindi, thus denying the much-desired IAS jobs to many deserving non-Hindi students.

The argument that, "many non-Hindi candidates get selected for IAS; so what is your problem" is irrational. Many non-Hindi candidates get selected for IAS jobs because of the hard work they put in preparation. We want people with equal knowledge, hard work, perseverance and skills selected for IAS without Hindi candidates having an unfair advantage.

3. The Preliminary Examination

There are three stages in the Civil Service Examinations for Indian Administrative Service (IAS): (1) Preliminary Examination, (2) Main Examination, and (3) Interview. It is the preliminary examination that created the protest demonstrations among Hindi students in 2014 and the resulting "solution" that created an appalling discrimination against non-Hindi candidates for IAS.

4. Tenth-Grade English Comprehension Test for IAS Candidates with College Degrees

Until 2011, candidates may write all preliminary examinations (science, social studies) in English or Hindi. Of course this is discriminatory against non-Hindi students; they have to choose between two languages (Hindi, English) neither of which is their mother tongue. Indian government rejected complaints and requests that non-Hindi students be allowed to write the preliminary examinations in their mother tongue.

In 2011, a new paper, "English language comprehension skills" was introduced in the preliminary examination; candidates are tested in English comprehension at the 10-th grade (Class X) level. This is what caused the uproar among Hindi-medium students and politicians from Hindi states; they wanted to pass the preliminary examination with no tests of their English skills even at the 10-th grade level. Until 2011, they could pass through the preliminary examination knowing only their mother tongue Hindi and no knowledge of any other language.

Although Hindi students were complaining since 2011, it took the form of vocal and violent protests in 2014. The most "intense" protest happened in late July 2014. "Around 400-500 [IAS] aspirants took out a candle march in Mukherjee Nagar area in north Delhi. The aspirants started pelting stones at the police personnel, who resorted to a baton charge, injuring many students. The agitated students burned down two buses and a police booth in nearby Nehru Vihar area. At least 50 students were detained and taken to a police station, while a few injured students were taken to a hospital." [India Today; July 31, 2014]

The Indian government, which did nothing for years on non-Hindi students' request that they be allowed to answer questions in their mother tongue, acted fast on Hindi students' complaint. Indian Government announced on August 4, 2014 that English comprehension

examination would not be counted for gradation and merit [Economic Times; August 4, 2014]. So, now, Hindi students can pass through the preliminary examinations without knowing English (proficient only in their mother tongue Hindi) but non-Hindi students have to write the entire preliminary examination in English or Hindi, neither of which is their mother tongue.

Seeing that the Indian government had responded positively to Hindi students, non-Hindi politicians and students renewed their long-time plea that non-Hindi students write their preliminary examinations in their mother tongue. The Indian government said, "no". The language discrimination against non-Hindi students continues.

How many bright, hard-working non-Hindi students lost their chance to becoming a much desired IAS officer because of this language based discrimination?

[Author's Note: We present two short stories to illustrate the discrimination in the next section. If you are not interested in stories you may skip that section and go to the end. Thank you.]

5. Two Stories to Illustrate the Discrimination

5.1 Story of the Step Mother

There was a woman who had a daughter and a stepdaughter, both of the same age. Each daughter had her own bedroom. Somehow a rat was getting into the stepdaughter's room night after night and biting her feet. The step daughter asked the step mother to do something to get rid of the rat but the step mother brushed it aside saying, "Oh, it is a little rat bite; not a big deal."

Then a few months later, a colony of ants got into the daughter's room and were biting her legs. Daughter complained to her mother. Mother immediately hired an exterminator to get rid of the ants. Seeing that the stepmother acted positively to her daughter's problem, the step daughter asked the step mother, "Mom, please ask the exterminator to get rid of the rat too." The stepmother refused. Such is the situation with IAS preliminary examinations and the step-motherly treatment towards non-Hindi students.

5.2 Story of the One-Kilometer Race

There were two groups of students competing in a one-kilometer race every year for prizes and scholarships. For some odd reason, one group of students had to run with a 2-kilogram ankle weight. School head master refused to act on complaints from the discriminated students. Then the race administrator asked everyone (from both groups) to wear a half-kilogram ankle weight. The favoured group appealed to the head master about having to run with the half-kilogram weight and the head master asked the race administrator to remove the half-kilogram weight. The discriminated students came to the head master and said, "Sir, please remove our two-kilogram weights also so that we can

compete fairly with the other group." The head master refused. Such is the situation with the IAS preliminary examination.

6. Closing Thoughts

We close this article by asking again, "How many bright, hard-working non-Hindi students lost their chance to becoming a much desired IAS officer because of this language based discrimination?" Is it fair? Is it just?

[**Foot Note:** If pressure from non-Hindi regions intensify, Indian government may allow non-Hindi students to write the preliminary examination in mother tongue but it will at the same time add Hindi imposition elsewhere. Look at the use of Hindi 5 years ago and now. Is there more Hindi imposition or less? That is what we need to look at. Take any five-year period starting from 1965. There will always be more Hindi imposition at the end of that period. Only permanent solution is amending the Indian constitution. Is it possible?]

(First Published: February 2015)

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19.

Defense Service Entrance Examination in English and Hindi Only

Thanjai Nalankilli

[This chapter is included in Volume 12 (under the title "Indian Rural Youth" means "Hindi Rural Youth" to Indian Defense Ministry) also because of its relevance there.]

On December 17, 2003, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) Member of Parliament Mr. P.G. Narayanan raised the issue of continued Hindi imposition by the Indian Government. He said that until then the Combined Defense Service entrance examination was held in English only and a recent government order now allows candidates to write the examination in either English or Hindi. He pointed out that this is discriminatory to non-Hindi candidates because both English and Hindi are alien to them while Hindi is the mother tongue of Hindi speakers. He said that this gives an unfair advantage to Hindi speakers. He urged the Indian Government to hold the examination in all Indian languages so that all candidates can choose to write the examination in their own mother tongue.

Defense Minister Mr. George Fernandes replied that Hindi was added in addition to English on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defense in order to attract talented youth from rural areas to enter Defense Service. Read the reason for making Hindi as an examination language again: "in order to attract talented youth from rural areas to enter Defense Service" [The Hindu; December 18, 2003].

I am at a total loss to understand how making Hindi an examination language would attract "talented rural youth from Tamilnadu or Andhra Pradesh or West Bengal or Nagaland to Defense Service. The only talented rural youth who would benefit are those from Hindi speaking states and possibly those states closer to them where Hindi is widely known. Rural youth from the south or northeast or other non-Hindi regions would in no way benefit from the new Indian Government policy to attract talented rural youth to Defense Service. On the contrary the new policy hurts their chances of employment with the Defense Department.

To the Hindi belt politicians who set India's language policies, Indian rural youth means Hindi rural youth. The non-Hindi rural youth do not matter to them; they do not care if talented rural youth from non-Hindi states lose out in the competition for jobs in the defense department. Only the Hindi people count; others are second-class citizens. Laws are passed, decisions are made and orders are issued to benefit the Hindi people, be it in financial grants, jobs, education or television programmes. In every one of these spheres the Indian Government decisions, laws and orders give Hindi people a decided advantage. This is the fact of life in India.

"We will go to every part of Tamil Nadu and tell the people that Hindi is coming and that it is like a thunder strike on the heads of Tamil and Dravidian people.... If Hindi were to become the official language of India, Hindi-speaking people will govern us. We will be

treated like third rate citizens".- Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai, Public Meeting at Chennai Marina (Madras Marina), April 29, 1963.

(First Published: August 2005)

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20.

Hindi Extremism Again in UPSC (and IAS) Examinations

K. Chezhian
Thanjai Nalankilli

ABBREVIATIONS

IAS - Indian Administrative Service
UPSC - Union Public Service Commission

Many Indian central (union) government jobs are filled through Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) examinations; this includes the most coveted Indian Administrative Service (IAS) examinations. Examinations used to be in English and Hindi only. Then after much protest from non-Hindi peoples, answers in mother tongue was also allowed. Then came a bombshell in March 2013. UPSC changed the rules and issued notification that if a minimum of 25 candidates does not opt to write the examinations in a particular regional language, no one can write the examinations in that language but use English or Hindi. This restriction does not apply to Hindi. That is, suppose only 24 candidates choose to write the examination in Kannada, they would not be allowed to write in Kannada; they would have to answer in English or Hindi. This restriction does not apply to Hindi. So even if only one candidate chooses to write in Hindi, that candidate can. This is outright discriminatory against non-Hindi peoples. (The Hindu, March 31, 2013)

Another discriminatory restriction was that only candidates who had their education in the medium of mother tongue up to the graduation level may write UPSC examinations in the mother tongue. However this restriction does not apply to Hindi. Candidates whose mother tongue is Hindi but did not study in Hindi medium (but chose English medium) can write answers in Hindi (The Hindu, March 31, 2013). Treat all languages alike. We all pay taxes; non-Hindi peoples expect to be treated equal to Hindi people. **Is it the land of the Hindi people and Non-Hindi people are some intruders in a Hindi country?**

Opposition to this new regulation grew in non-Hindi states. Non-Hindi members of parliament opposed it. Tamilnadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa said, "**these changes are highly discriminatory and appear to be calculated to bias the system against Civil Service aspirants from non-Hindi speaking regions of the country.**" She asked the Prime Minister to revoke the changes. Within weeks, on March 21, Indian Government withdrew the new rules.

We want to point out that it is still not a fair field for non-Hindi candidates. Questions are still in English and Hindi only; but answers in some cases may be written in the mother tongue. This does give some advantage to candidates from Hindi states. We say, "Provide question papers in all Indian languages".

COMMENTARY

Some may say, "When you opposed, they corrected it. So what is the problem?" Our response is, "Why is it happening again and again? Why should non-Hindi peoples have to demonstrate against it every time when Indian government elevates Hindi and downgrades other languages? We have other things to do than to keep watch for these Indian government moves and agitate against these acts? These agitations and demonstrations take time and divert our time and energy from studies and work."

We would like to see an enquiry into who was responsible for making these discriminatory changes, and action be taken against those responsible. Dismiss the guilty party if it is an Indian Government minister. Dismiss the guilty party and cancel future pension payments if it is a civil service bureaucrat. Non-Hindi members of parliament and chief ministers must act in unison to have those responsible for these changes punished. Only then such mischievous actions would stop. This is not the first time these discriminatory actions against non-Hindi peoples have taken place.

(First Published: July 2013)

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21.

Triple Injustice of Hindi in Indian Government Offices

Thanjai Nalankilli

OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. The Triple Injustice of Making Hindi the Official Language of India (Even if one Learns Hindi, Still is Disadvantaged in Indian Government Jobs)
 - 2.1 The First Injustice: Entrance Examinations for Indian Government Jobs
 - 2.2 The Second Injustice: Hindi Examinations at Indian Government Jobs
 - 2.3 The Third Injustice: Working in Hindi at Indian Government Offices
3. Language of the Ruling Race becomes the Official Language
4. Injustice Behind Closed Doors

1. Introduction

Hindi was made the official language of India on January 26, 1950 against the opposition of Tamil people and leaders. Most Congress Party members from Madras Province (that included much of today's Tamil Nadu State) opposed Hindi vehemently during initial discussions. But they voted for it in the end, obeying Congress Party leadership that was in the hands of Hindi belt politicians [You can read the Constituent Assembly Debates in "Constituent Assembly Debates: Official Report; 12 volumes, covering 1946-1950"]. The dark cloud of Hindi set over the Tamil people from then on until this day.

Hindi is thrust forcibly into unwilling non-Hindi throats with the full force and power of every Indian Government apparatus. Hindi is forced into non-Hindi regions in many forms: Hindi signs on everything owned or operated by Indian Government, even forced Hindi on the labels of lifesaving drugs (no Tamil on the labels though), non-stop Hindi on broadcast television and government operated cable and satellite television, and through government jobs. This article discusses how Hindi in Indian Government offices is adversely affecting non-Hindi employees, **even if they learn Hindi**.

2. The Triple Injustice of Making Hindi the Official Language of India (Even if one Learns Hindi, Still is Disadvantaged in Indian Government Jobs)

2.1 The First Injustice: Entrance Examinations for Indian Government Jobs

Many Indian Government job entrance (or selection) examinations are held in English and Hindi. (In recent years SOME examinations are also held in mother tongue). This gives a great advantage to those whose mother tongue is Hindi. They write the examinations in their mother tongue while non-Hindi people have to write in one of two

foreign tongues--English or Hindi. Even if you learn Hindi at school it does not put you at par with those whose mother tongue is Hindi. This is unfair and unjust [Volume 1; Chapter 2 - "How India's Official Language Policy is Hurting Non-Hindi Peoples"]. All job examinations should be held in mother tongue to make everyone equal.

2.2 The Second Injustice: Hindi Examinations at Indian Government Jobs

Let us say that you pass the job entrance (selection) examination and got a job at an Indian Government office. Non-Hindi employees are required to attend Hindi classes and pass Hindi examinations even if they are working in non-Hindi states. Those who do not do so are reprimanded and there are many cases where salary increments and promotions were withheld until they pass the examinations. A memorandum sent to Southern Railways managers says, "Employees not attending Hindi training classes **should be severely dealt with**" [Volume 5; Chapter 16].

A Hindi friend once argued with me that Indian Government is very fair because it does not require knowledge of Hindi to get the job but only asks [actually forces] employees to study Hindi after getting the job. He is not right on two counts. As discussed in Section 2.1, conducting entrance examinations in English and Hindi is unfair to non-Hindi candidates. Secondly, requiring that non-Hindi employees attend Hindi classes and pass Hindi examinations is totally unfair. This requires time commitment on the part of non-Hindi employees to study Hindi at some point in their life (during school years or later after joining Indian Government service). While non-Hindi students are studying Hindi, which has no use except for the fact that Hindi is forced on them as India's official language, Hindi students can utilize that time to study more useful subjects like computer programming or advanced English which would be useful in a broader array of careers anywhere in the world. Don't you think non-Hindi peoples are getting the short end of the stick?

2.3 The Third Injustice: Working in Hindi at Indian Government Offices

Alright, let us say a non-Hindi employee has (1) passed the selection examination in spite of the injustice of holding many of those examinations in English and Hindi only, and (2) then studied and passed the required Hindi examination in order to get annual salary increment. What then? Is it all fair and just from then on? No, it is not. Non-Hindi employees have to jump through hoops all through their career at Indian Government offices.

All Indian Government offices are required to carry out certain percentage of work in Hindi. At the time of writing this article, 55% of work should be done in Hindi in Indian Government offices located in Tamilnadu. This puts a great burden on non-Hindi employees even if they know Hindi. Hindi employees are working in their mother tongue while we are required to do more than half the work in their mother tongue. However much you have learned Hindi, you cannot think and work in Hindi as fast and as well as those whose mother tongue is Hindi. You are stressed out more and are less productive. In spite of these discriminatory disadvantage many non-Hindi employees still excel in

their jobs, that is a testament to their hard work while Hindi employees have it a little easier and less stressful. Is it not unjust? Is it not unfair?

3. Language of the Ruling Race becomes the Official Language

Ruling race always want to do government business in its mother tongue. When the French ruled Puducherry, all official work there was done in French. When the Portuguese ruled Goa, all official work was done in Portuguese. Now central government work in Puducherry and Goa are done in Hindi because Hindi people have become the rulers.

"If Hindi is made the Union official language,... it gives to a section of the people of India the position of a **ruling race**". - Former Madras State Chief Minister C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) [Rajaji was a supporter of Hindi but changed his mind after seeing its discriminatory effect on non-Hindi peoples.]

4. Injustice Behind Closed Doors

Most people do not know the injustice meted out to non-Hindi employees behind the closed doors of Indian Government offices. Many think that there is no Hindi imposition because they do not know non-Hindi employees are forced to work in Hindi. There is nothing the non-Hindi employees could do because they need the job to feed and take care of their families. They grit their teeth, bite their tongues and do the work in Hindi while the Hindi employees sitting next to them are doing their work in their own mother tongue. It is more stressful and more time-consuming to non-Hindi employees. If a Hindi employee and a non-Hindi employee of comparable intelligence, subject knowledge and work ethics were competing for a promotion, the Hindi employee is likely to get it because he is working in his mother tongue. Yet, many non-Hindi employees do rise up because of their harder work and perseverance. It is like a star marathon runner running with a five-kilogram weight tied to his ankles. If he still wins the race it is his higher athletic prowess, hard work and perseverance.

Let us hope that one day we could end the Hindi rule over us. Let that day come soon.

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